

# The American Teacher

*Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy.*

VOL. I No. 7

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER, 1912

50 CENTS A YEAR

## The Letter and the Spirit

IT was known of old that the letter killeth, whereas the spirit giveth life.

All our organizations and systems, all our supervisions and plans and syllabuses are matters of form, merely letters thru which to spell out whatever spirit we still have to express.

If we have no more to guide us in our work, we are lost indeed.

It is the business of the teacher, as it is the business of the supervising and administering official of a school system, to seek his guidance not in the rule book, nor in the course of study, nor in the annual report, but in the nature of the child and in the needs of the child.

He who teaches in this spirit may feel compelled at times to ignore the syllabus, to forget the book, to break the rules, aye—and to challenge authority.

## BREAD WITH EDUCATION

A. V. ARMSTRONG, St. Louis, Mo.

THE SLOGAN, "Bread with Education," adopted by the promoters of the movement for providing nutritious food for those children in the public schools unable to obtain it otherwise, calls to mind Charles Lamb's "Grace Before Meat." "It is a confusion of purpose," he says, "to mutter out praises from a mouth that waters. The incense which rises round is pagan, and the belly-god intercepts it for his own." So is it a confusion of purpose to attempt to pour intellectual stimulants into the mind of a child when his "belly-god" is crying out for food.

Educators are just beginning thoroughly to realize that at least one way to a child's brain is thru its stomach; for the matter has recently been investigated and the resultant figures show a large percentage of underfed and insufficiently nourished children among those attending Uncle Sam's institutions of learning. It is not fair, say those who have made a careful study of the problem, to make laws compelling children to go to school, to force them to sit all day and have facts and ideas poured into their ears and brains, to brand them as "incompetent" or "backward" if they cannot accept them, when all the time their poor little bodies are crying out for nourishment; and that persistent wail is drowning the sound of the teacher's voice and dimming the eyes so that they cannot see the books before them.

With this cry of the children for incentive, a movement has recently been started in the United States to get on the right road, and its momentum is increasing rapidly and becoming irresistible. It operates under the caption of School Feeding, and its slogan is, "Bread with Education." Altho but recently agitated in the United States, the idea of placing nutritious food within the reach of children who are otherwise without it, is not a new one. For years in a number of foreign countries lunches have been provided in connection with the schools, the work in some being under the administration of the government. The *Psycho-*

*logical Clinic* is authority for a short history of the origin and growth of school lunches in Europe, from the first municipal soup kitchen opened in Munich in 1790, which was designed as a step in the campaign against vagrancy, but to which many school children were sent to get a warm meal at noon. "This antedated compulsory education," says the writer, "and was unorganized for a long time but was never abandoned, and now there is a municipal ordinance in Munich requiring that every new school-house shall have a kitchen and a dining-room." In France since 1849, and in England since 1866, there have been movements on foot in this direction until only there is scarcely a country which has not some provision for children whose parents are unable or unwilling to provide sufficient and nourishing food. Again quoting the same magazine, "School feeding has been made the subject of national legislation in France, Bavaria, Denmark, Switzerland, Holland and Great Britain. It is national in scope with support by the municipalities in Germany, Italy, Sweden, Norway, Austria and Belgium. It has been started in Spain, Russia and the United States."

The last statement is hardly a fair recognition of what has been accomplished in our own country because a number of cities have already established systematic methods and have a good working basis for operations. It is difficult to say just where the movement started in the United States, as there have been unorganized attempts in some of the eastern cities for a good many years, but only within the last few years has it become systematic and is now a real educational issue rather than a charitable and philanthropic one.

According to Louise S. Bryant of the University of Pennsylvania, general public interest in school feeding began with the publication in 1904 of Robert Hunter's book, "Poverty." In it he made the statement that there must be "very likely sixty or seventy thousand children

in New York City alone who often arrive at school, hungry and unfitted to do well the work assigned to them." Following up his revelations, investigations were instigated by various physicians and organizations. One or two will serve to illustrate. John Spargo, author of "The Bitter Cry of the Children," gathered reliable information in regard to the breakfasts of 12,000 children in sixteen different schools. The following figures were obtained: of 12,000 children, 987, or nearly 8 per cent., had no breakfast; 1963 others, or more than 15 per cent., had inadequate breakfasts; making a total of 23 per cent. of all children in those schools who were poorly fed so far as this could be judged by breakfast alone. He further ascertained that many of the children did not go home to lunch, some having none at all and those (anywhere from 10 to 20 per cent. of the children) who were given pennies to buy something to eat, purchased unwholesome pickles, bologna sandwiches and cheap candies.

Statistics without number have been compiled by various persons vitally interested in this somewhat startling state of affairs and they all point to the one need—Young America must be safeguarded. "In Chicago in 1908," says Miss Bryant, "of 10,090 children in twelve schools, 825 were found by medical inspectors to be suffering from malnutrition, due to deficient food." In addition, 353 others were found who were undernourished, but for whose condition other causes than inadequate food might be responsible. This means that a total of 1178, or 12 per cent. of those examined were badly nourished. In Philadelphia, in 1909-10, a special investigation of 500 children in one school in a poor district, including a medical examination and a visit to the home of each child, revealed serious underfeeding in 119 cases, forming 24 per cent. of the whole. In Boston, the routine medical inspection of all children in 1909, revealed between 5,000 and 6,000 cases of underfeeding and anemia, among a total of 80,000 children. In St. Paul, in 1910, Dr. Meyerding, head of the Medical Inspection, made a special examination of 3,200

children in schools directly chosen from the poorer districts. He found that 644 or 60 per cent. of the whole, showed marked underfeeding. In Rochester, in 1910, Dr. Franklin Bock examined 15,157 children. Of these he designated 752 or 5 per cent. as showing evident lack of nutrition, and 1,285 as anemic. "As a general conclusion from these investigations," says the *Psychological Clinic*, "it seems fair to place the probable number of seriously underfed school children in New York and other American cities, at 10 per cent. of the school population. This number doubtless includes many who might be able to pay for an adequate lunch at noon if the opportunity were provided.

Miss Alice C. Boughton sums up conditions in Philadelphia in a few words: "There are approximately 170,000 children in the primary schools of Philadelphia. Over one-third of this number come from homes below the poverty line, one-third more are just above it and the remaining one-third are comfortably situated." As an example of what effects the sort of food the children in the first two classes have, Charles Keen Taylor, M. A., has gathered some figures on the reaction of coffee drinking on the system of a child. In round terms his conclusions are these:

"The children concerned in this test who drank coffee regularly, averaged from one and a half to more than four pounds less in weight, from a half inch to more than an inch less in height, and all the way to three pounds less in hand-strength than those who never drank coffee. These differences may not be startling," he concludes, "but it is evident that there are differences."

And now a few figures on the other side to show results of school feeding. The experiment was tried in Philadelphia and both physical and mental improvement was very marked. Measurements were taken and recorded of 362 children in two schools, of whom 114 took fifteen or more dinners during the six months' period of the test and 248 took no dinners. The average number of dinners per child, of those taking dinners, was 50.6. Both groups of children

were tested at the beginning and again at the end of the six months' period. The accompanying table speaks for itself.

	Weight	Height	Hand strength	Lung capacity
	lbs.	in.	lbs.	cu. in.
114 "diners" .....	3.44	1.36	3.43	12.55
248 "non-diners" ..	3.21	1.07	4.18	10.46
In favor of "diners" .....	.23	.29		2.09
In favor of "non-diners" ..			.75	

A second test made under similar conditions showed the following results:

	lbs.	in.	lbs.	cu. in.
Children fed.....	1.78	.90	4.13	11.96
Children not fed..	.80	.68	3.19	5.40
In favor of children fed.....	.98	.22	.94	6.56

Evidently the school lunches are not in vain. Persons well versed in food values and with an intimate knowledge of children are in charge in every instance where the experiments are being made. The menus vary somewhat in the different places but not materially. One hot dish is furnished every day, baked beans, soup, spaghetti, cocoa, with a cake, or Irish stew. To any one of these which are furnished for one check, are added wholesome cakes, butter cake, milk, sandwiches, dried peaches, fruit and such good food stuffs, any one of which may be had for another check. Pure candies are for sale after the more substantial food has disappeared.

One problem after another comes up on course in connection with the lunches. Not only must the children be offered nutritious food, but it must be attractive—it must tempt their appetites. A child eats with its eyes first and if they are not satisfied, the trouble is all for nothing. Little black-haired, black-eyed Master Italian wants his spaghetti. Keen calculating Master Jew his kosher meats—all must be appealed to. Once let the little urchins turn up their noses and all is lost. In one school for colored children which the writer visited in St. Louis, the attendant said: "No use to offer the little dusky kiddies spaghetti

any more. They turn up their noses and keep their pennies. They want meat."

The "little white wagon" is the Nemesis of school feeding everywhere, and the cheap lunch room is almost as bad. At these places children are able to buy stale cakes, cheap candies, and ice creams and they get "lots for their money"—more than at school. That the cakes are stale and the candy perhaps made of poisonous material means nothing to them. So to the task of providing is added the necessity of educating little ones up to appreciating and demanding that which is best in the long run.

Nor does it take a bright little youngster long to feel the responsibility and to recognize the advantages, and they soon come to be perfectly satisfied with what they can get at their own school and even grow to demand it at home.

The simple rules of etiquette are observed where the teachers can suggest by a hint here and there. One tiny tot in Chicago writes, "You can always tell a new child because he doesn't know how to behave. He takes too big bites and wants to go away before he is done." Very little restraint is exercised over the children while they are at their lunch but the influence is in the air and they feel it.

The dear little kiddies are unconscious of their need, but it is all the more poignant for that very reason. They do not know what makes them feel "all cross" or "just like fightin' somebody," but they hate teacher when she calls them back from their dreams and asks them to tell her how much two times two is. Their small bodies have been stimulated in the morning perhaps by a cup of hot coffee or they have been sent off to school by an anxious and worried mother with a couple of cents to buy something to eat; but there is nothing to build up real "brain and brawn"—nothing to make a vigorous body and a keen wide-awake mind, anxious to learn, impatient to be fed.

One visit at the noon hour to one of these lunch rooms will make as many converts as there are visitors. To see the tiny tots and the larger boys and girls too, rush to the counter, survey its con-

tents quickly and make their choice, then run off to a seat and begin devouring the food ravenously, to know that this is the kind of food to round out the thin, scrawny arms and to build up the hollows in the sunken cheeks, to smoothe away the black circles round the big staring eyes, and to sweep the cobwebs out of the brain, is to see a bright future for Uncle Sam's coming nation builders. The older children help the younger ones, some even earn their tickets by helping to serve. Almost without exception are they ready to stand by their "penny lunches." If after careful investigation some are found who cannot obtain money for their tickets, checks are provided for them by some charitable institution, but they are exactly the same as the others, so there is no way of telling which are free and which are paid for.

Time was when these lunches were con-

sidered entirely outside the province of education. But that time shall be no more. They have earned their right as a fundamental principle and as such they have come to stay. The ultimate and ideal goal is "municipal ownership" or an endowment fund sufficient to meet the demands, with the Board of Education behind the management. The government health department is at present gathering statistics on the numbers of children who are likely to be in need of ~~the~~ proper food and they will be available in the near future. That is the first step. Rapid progress is being made in our American cities, and this year is far ahead of last. A few new schools are added gradually and the work becomes simpler and more firmly established with each passing month. Ere long, we hope, it will be a national movement.

## SOME ECONOMIC OBSTACLES TO EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

BENJAMIN C. GRUENBERG.

SOME OF THE OBSTACLES to educational progress are irremediable; but economic obstacles will persist only as long as we let them, as long as we are willing to submit. And by economic obstacles I do not mean merely such facts, for example, as that New York City has not the material resources to provide seats for all of its school children; or that in the same city more than half of the school children are herded in classes of over forty each. The obstacles I have chiefly in mind are those consequences of our economic system which interfere with education—considering education as a machinery for securing to society certain ideal ends.

With the growth of democracy, especially during the last hundred and fifty years, there has grown a demand for the extension of the benefits of education—along with the extension of other advantages—to *all*. To those educated under the old régime education meant culture and the enjoyment of leisure, refinement, aesthetic uplift. But to the uneducated, the unwashed, thrown un-

der conditions of political democracy and social and industrial fluidity, education meant opportunity for success. And success meant prosperity under the conditions of commercial, competitive efforts in the arts of appropriation. Education taken over by the public has expanded to mean preparation for civic relations—good citizenship, patriotism—and eventually for social service.

We have then at present a three-cornered conflict in the aims of education: There is the traditional humanitarian demand for culture; there is the individualistic demand for general success; and there is the social demand for service and citizenship. In this struggle the economic pressure threatens the other aims. So long as industry is conducted for profit, all considerations must yield before the demand of the workers for the opportunity to earn wages, and the demand of the employers for wage-earners.

According to the ideals of democracy, whatever advantages may accrue from public education must be advantages for



all the members of society. Democracy forbids that its children be trained to exploit one another. Humanity demands that each child shall get whatever is best *for him*, not whatever it is best *for someone else* that he should have. In other words, education should be directed to the benefit of the individual being educated, and not to the benefit of some third party. Society demands that education shall direct each child into those activities, and shall prepare him for those activities, that will enable him to render society an optimum of service.

But our economic organization demands that children be sent to school as little as possible, in order to be free as soon as possible to enter the service of the employer; it demands wage-earning at the earliest possible moment in the life of the child. And these demands overshadow all the others. We distribute our children in the schools, beyond the elementary grades, not, as we should, according to their capacities, not according to their interests, not according to their varying vitality—but according to the economic status of their parents, and the immediate economic interests of the employer and taxpayer.

The question, "How long should this child be kept in school?" and the question, "To what special kind of school should this child be sent?" are answered, not, as they should be, by reference to the child's capacity to benefit by the schooling processes, not by reference to society's needs for the special talents of the child, not by reference to the child's needs in the way of personal development—but by reference to the parents' proximity to—bankruptcy. This gauge is purely fortuitous, extrinsic and irrelevant; but it is one forced upon us by the practice of conducting most of our affairs for profit and exploitation, instead of conducting them for use and human happiness. This practice, developed in our industries, dominates our schooling and our politics as it does everything else.

In the interests of the individual, as a human being, and in the interests of society, of which the child is to become an integral part, our education should aim on the one hand to adapt the pupil to the

common life, and on the other hand, to adapt its methods to the personality with which it has to deal. But our schools, under the influence of economic pressure, have become commercialized.

By this I do not mean that the management of the schools is motivated by an itch for profit, as is implied, for example, when we speak of the professions of law and medicine having become commercialized. I mean merely that our educators have yielded to the temper of their surroundings, which are distinctly commercial. The organization and the methods of the schools have taken on the form of those commercial enterprises that distinguish our economic life. We have yielded to the arrogance of "big business men" and have accepted their criteria of efficiency at their own valuation, without question. We have consented to measure the results of educational efforts in terms of price and product—the terms that prevail in the factory and the department store. But education, since it deals in the first place with *organisms*, and in the second place with *individualities*, is not analogous to a standardizable manufacturing process. Education must measure its efficiency not in terms of so many promotions per dollar of expenditure, nor even in terms of so many student-hours per dollar of salary; it must measure its efficiency in terms of increased humanism, increased power to do, increased capacity to appreciate. Both the cost and the products of education are incommensurable with the factors that determine commercial success in the narrower sense. So long, however, as we conduct our education under the auspices and under the dominance of men whose guiding principle is derived from an economic system that makes "profit" the chief end of existence, our education must bear the handicaps suggested.

It may be that we can build better streets and bridges and city halls—for the money—by employing the kind of men that you can get by letting them bid against each other for the jobs, the kind of men who are driven by necessity to accept jobs for wages that approach the margin of mere animal subsistence. It

may be that we can get good-enough steel and clothing and furniture and ostrich plumes—for the money—even if the workers who make these things for us are more concerned with keeping the jobs than they are with the quality of the product; even if these workers have but slight enthusiasm for their wages and none at all for their work; even if they are too tired for recreation that reaches the spirit, when the day's stint is done; even if they never travel, except in search of another job. But you cannot get better results for your children in the schools—even for the money—by employing the kind of men and women that you can get by the methods of the market-place. You cannot get good enough results from the school—even for the money—if the workers are obliged to think too much of the matter of jobs, and too little of the quality of the results; if they have but little enthusiasm, and not all of that for the work; if they are too tired for recreation that reaches the spirit, when their day's task is done; if they have to spend a large part of their "leisure" in supplementing the money that you think you can afford to pay them, not merely to be able to travel—but to be able to meet routine expenses on a very modest plane of living. And so other people's children suffer at the hands of the perplexed teacher—he has things on his mind that seriously obstruct his work for these children; and these obstructive apprehensions and perplexities are direct products of our economic organization of things.

The same influences show themselves in the commercialization of the schools on the side of the pupil. Every teacher must have observed that the attitude of the student of his work is increasingly that of the merchant. The pupil comes more and more to work for a "pass." The Harvard aphorism, *A pass is a gentleman's grade*, reveals the bargain attitude of mind. This bargaining attitude is coming to be a matter of course in our schools, notwithstanding the earnest efforts of educators to counteract it. Working for a pass is of the very essence of our economic system, actuated as it is thruout by the principle of buying cheap

and selling dear—the principle of profit.

The influence of the prevailing economic mode shows itself in the administration of our school system. Aside from the fact, already referred to, that the selection of teachers from out of the general population is in too large an extent affected by the economic consideration of cost, we have the fact that in many positions women are employed, where men would be more desirable—because women are cheaper. The assignment of teachers to this grade or to that, which should be altogether determined by considerations of special fitness for special work, is made a means of rewarding the faithful, or punishing the insurgents, since—such is the perversity of systems—in many cities the salary of the teacher is graded not according to the ability of the teacher, but according to the age of the pupils!

In numberless cases men and women are retained in the schools who never should be in the schools at all, because, in spite of the models set up by the business man, we refuse to throw anyone to the scrapheap; unemployment is something too terrible to think of—for cultured men and women. In every large city you can find from a dozen to a hundred or more teachers whom the public could well afford to retire on full pay, tho they are far from "old." I do not mean that these cities have overflowing treasuries, or that these teachers have rendered such excellent service in the past that they deserve the extra leisure and the extra money. I mean simply that it would be true economy to pay these people to abstain from teaching, even if they cannot be provided with other occupations. But altho such a course would be true economy educationally, under existing economic conditions that would be unthinkable.

Another series of obstacles to educational progress, one that has received rapidly growing recognition on all sides for the past dozen years, is that made up of the relation of the physical condition of the child to the efficacy of the teacher's work. Even the most obtuse taxpayer can see that it is a waste of money to show pretty pictures to blind children,

or to offer classical music to the deaf. By the same token a large part of our educational activity has been quite unproductive. Nay, it has been worse than non-productive: for instead of merely failing to give the children in question something worth while, it has given them an aversion to all that has to do with schools and teachers. I refer now to the fact that we have offered the same "education" indiscriminately to all children without considering the state of their sense organs or of their nutrition; without noticing adenoids or cold feet or sheer exhaustion.

If we acknowledge the state's concern in the child as a social asset we may not defeat the major purpose of education by a formal compliance with the technical requirements for instruction, while we shut our eyes to the essentials. The important thing is not that our constables keep the child in school so many hours, so many days, so many years. The important thing is that the raw little savage shall be converted into a healthy, happy and efficient citizen. If for this purpose books and blackboards suffice, well and good. If, however, galoshes and gruels are also needed—then galoshes and gruels we must have. But at this point we run afoul not only of the taxpayer's plea of communal poverty—"financial inability" it is called technically—but also of all the ancient and honorable traditions as to the legitimate limits of the activities of a society founded on contracts.

Another obstacle that springs directly from our economic relations is the low social status of the teacher. This is intimately connected, on the one hand, with the fact that the prevailing measure of values is a commercial one, and on the other hand, with the fact that the economic status of the teacher is so low. Both of these facts are integral parts of our economic system. The lower social status of the teacher reacts upon education in various ways. In many classes of our population (and it is perhaps unnecessary to say that these are *not* the "lowest" classes) and in many communities or districts, the respect accorded to the teacher is so scanty that it directly

affects the discipline and the effectiveness of the work. Connected with the economic status, it affects the self-esteem of the teacher and again interferes with good work. It denies to a large part of the teaching body opportunity for broader associations and so deprives the school of the intellectual and moral and aesthetic advantages that such associations could bring. And finally it deprives the schools, and so the public, of the best services of hundreds of splendid, eager young men and women who are prepared to make the economic sacrifices involved in teaching, but who are not willing to make the sacrifices involved in the teacher's social status.

The aims of education and the economic order are incompatible. To which it is proper to reply that education is not an end in itself. That is true; but neither is the contract relationship or the principle of profit an end in itself. The spirit of democracy and the spirit of business are incompatible. Again, democracy is not an end in itself, and neither is business. Education is a device for advancing human welfare; so is democracy; so is business. These are all means to a more remote end. How then can we accord preëminence to one set of means to a common end over other means? We cannot. We can only ask, Which of the conflicting ideals today promises best to further the major end? Or, Which of the conflicting ideals can best be spared?

From this point of view, I do not hesitate to say that the ideals of democracy, the ideals of the professional educators (with all their mistakes, which are many), the ideals of humanism—in harmony with one another—hold greater promise for the future of this country, or of the human race, than do the ideals of our economic system—with which none of the others is in harmony.

Education is not an end in itself; but it embodies the major purpose of conscious civilization. Whatever stands in its way stands in the way of mankind's deepest interests. The prevailing economic order must pass, if for no other reason, then for this: It is the greatest obstacle to educational progress.



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*Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy*

Published monthly, except July and August, by  
THE MOODS PUBLISHING COMPANY,  
134 West 29th Street, New York.

GEORGE SYLVESTER VIERECK, - *President.*  
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Address all manuscripts and other communica-  
tions to THE AMERICAN TEACHER,  
134 West 29th Street, New York.

Subscription price, 50 cents for the year.

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Entered at the Post Office of New York  
as second-class matter.

VOL. I. SEPTEMBER, 1912. No. 7.

*It is the aim of this paper to better the working conditions of the teacher, thru sober criticisms of present educational administration, and thru discussions tending toward a general realization of the democratic ideal in all matters affecting the schools.*

## A CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM

WHEN THE SUGGESTION was made in these columns some months ago that teachers should be consulted in the selection and grading of principals, it appeared to many as not only *impracticable* but too absurd to discuss seriously. A number kindly pointed out the unsoundness of the suggestion by carrying the argument to the extreme, asking us "Why not consult the children, why not ask them what should be taught, why not ask them to pass upon the teachers, why not consult them on the management of the school?" These questions certainly carry our position to an absurd extreme and were thrown at us with an air that indicated that they are quite unanswerable.

And yet the suggestion is not so absurd as it seems. For if we select our course of study from the point of view

of the experts in the subjects, without consulting the interests and the capacities of the children, our work will be in vain. If we select our teachers upon the basis of excellent records in college or university examinations, we may bring together scholarly and "able" men and women; but if we ignore in this selection the tastes and the susceptibilities of the children, our corps of teachers will be as the weeping willow tree—abundant in foliage, but bearing no fruit. If we plan our school management on excellent models of efficient military or industrial plants, but fail to consult the nature of the child, our good order will be an empty mockery.

And indeed, it is universally recognized among all who have given any thought to the matter that the nature of the child must be consulted at every step. That is the meaning of our child study and our experimental pedagogy and our courses in psychology and all our uneasy questionings about the final efficiency of our schools. It is because what a child needs to do, what a child is capable of doing, what a child likes to do are vital bases for all schoolwork that those who have studied their subjects and courses of study and book of rules while ignoring the child systematically fail to do the right thing.

The absurdity in the situation is not that children should be consulted in the organization of and management of schools, but that grown up men and women who are getting paid for running schools should imagine the views and the character of the child irrelevant in school business. It is absurd that grown up men and women can think of no other way of consulting children than by asking a class: "What would you like to do now"; or, "What kind of a teacher would you like next term?" Those teachers who systematically and conscientiously consult their children, and try to teach in accordance with what they thus learn, will be successful teachers. Those teachers who systematically and conscientiously consult the wishes of their principals and supervisors and conduct their affairs in accordance with these wishes

will undoubtedly be rated as good teachers; whether they really be good teachers or not is another matter. Should a body of high-grade teachers ever arise in this country, or anywhere else—this will only come to pass when a child shall lead them.

### YOURS TO SERVE

WITH THE BEGINNING of the present school term the Board of Superintendents of New York City will be so organized as to put each of the officials in charge of certain specified departments of activity, instead of certain geographical divisions of the school system. This change is in accordance with recommendations made by the Hanus Committee on School Inquiry; and it bears possibilities of far-reaching significance. It may be the beginning of a complete revolution in the organization and in the ideals of all our public schools.

This change in organization is significant because it marks the transition from the "line" to the "staff." The meaning of this distinction may perhaps be made clear by an illustration.

There is inspection of the regiment. The colonel and the inspecting officers parade down the line; every major stands at attention, facing the higher officers, and in every detail of face and equipment is to be read *Yours to command*. Each captain, backed by his lieutenants, stands in the same stiff posture, eyes riveted on "the man higher up," and silently but eloquently salutes him, *Yours to command*. And so the sergeant to the lieutenant, the corporal to the sergeant, and the private to all above. The military organization is based on command from the highest down the line to the lowest, its chief virtue is obedience, from the lowest to the highest. This is the principle of line organization.

By this theory of organization most of our industry and commerce, most of our government, most of our school administrations have been guided. The pupils must obey the teachers, both must obey the principal, all three classes the supervisor, all four the superintendent. The

new point of view reverses the relation. When the teacher comes into the room, she comes to serve the pupils.

The main business of the school is the children's business, not the teacher's. Certain superior teachers (let us hope that they are superior) are appointed heads of departments, or principals. It is their business to serve the principals and the teachers, to facilitate the work of those "beneath" them in rank; for the important business of the system is not what goes on in the supervisor's office, but what goes on in the head of the child, and all above must serve all below, all the way down the line. And the superintendent, too, is not an end in himself; he is supreme because, having wider vision and deeper thought, he can best serve all the rest. This illustrates the staff organization.

Instead of the stiff attitude of conventional respect and the generally insincere pass-word *Yours to command*, embodied in the traditional soldier, the new ideal calls for a human relaxation and the motto *Yours to serve*. To assign each teacher and each superintendent to the task wherein he may best serve the major purpose of the whole system, where he may best assist those with whom he is to cooperate in forwarding this major purpose, should be the aim of those whose task it is to appoint and promote and assign teachers and supervising officials. The result of adopting this ideal would be to establish the functional form of organization in place of the military; it would give to every member of a school system the benefit of the experience and thought of all the others, whether above him or below him in rank.

The change in the organization of the Board of Superintendents in New York is but the latest step in the direction of democratizing the schools—tho one may well doubt whether any of those chiefly concerned thought the matter in this way at all. The step was taken in the interest of *efficiency*; but we shall find that wherever considerations of efficiency take account of the human element the solution lies in the direction of greater democracy. Slowly, for the most part unconsciously, those entrusted with the

administration of the public schools are being forced to the adoption of more and more democratic methods of operation of equipment and treatment of teachers and pupils. We should further and hasten the process by making it conscious. We must work systematically toward the substitution of the staff principle of organization for that of the line principle, in the interests of efficiency as the "taxpayer" understands efficiency; in the interests of the half-million teachers who do the actual work of the schools; in the interests of the children who have most to gain or to lose; and in the interests of that society which is always arriving but never here.

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**THE WELFARE** of a nation obviously depends on the quality, as well as the number, of its school teachers. The men and women who have control of children and young people for a large fraction of their lives—who direct their opinions about the facts of the world and form many of their habits of thought, feeling and action, who fit future lawyers, physicians, clergymen, engineers, accountants, nurses and the like for their professions, and who are assuming a larger and larger share of the work of fitting the next generation for all its duties and privileges—should obviously be themselves first-rate in intellect, morals and skill. A nation which lets incapables teach it, while the capable men and women only feed and clothe or amuse it, is committing intellectual suicide. Conversely an enormous future gain is made by taking an Eliot for Harvard College rather than for a cotton factory; or by letting William James discover truth and teach our sons, instead of curing their ailments as a medical practitioner. Of the general problem of utilizing every individual's original capacities so as to have each do his most for the common good, there is no more important part than saving to teach us those who can do it well. From Edward L. Thorndike's "Education."

## THE PRICE OF PEACE

**WAR IS HELL.** We assert this on the best of authority—the authority of men who have experienced it. The honest men and women of the world, those who have to work for a living, are tired of war, they are sick of war. The thoughtful men and women of the world, those of clear vision who can look thru traditions and see beyond to-morrow, are disgusted with war, with its folly, its cruelty, its unspeakable cruelty and folly.

The teachers of France have committed the indiscretion of resolving against this ancient and honorable, but worse than stupid method of settling international disputes. As leaders of the young they evidently felt it incumbent upon them to give voice to the commonplace of all enlightened minds—namely, that war is in all ways undesirable.

But this kind of resolving, it seems, falls in the category of the unpardonable—in France. For at a recent meeting of the Cabinet the Minister of Education was directed to dissolve the thirty-odd teachers' organizations that represent the thought and devotion of the best citizens of France.

If this had happened in Russia—well, it could not happen in Russia. Last summer the teachers there planned to have a national convention, but the Government would not permit this to take place. If this had happened in Germany, we should attribute the action of the Cabinet to the fact that in a monarchy liberty of thought and expression is restricted.

But France is a Republic—our Sister Republic! France is also the land of the free and home of the brave, as witness her motto: "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity!" But France has maintained, in spite of the republican political forms, a thoroly reactionary military organization in all departments of public life, and it is this that has made impossible a healthy development of democratic relations in her bureaus and ministries. France, under the third Republic, administers her affairs in close imitation of the German Empire—and for the simple reason that her leading citizens are in close commercial competition with those

of Germany and of the other principal nations. No nation can become democratized unless all her neighbors are prepared to do the same; no department of life can become free while the rest are in chains. Our education is intimately bound up with our life, in the end education is life; and education cannot be free while the men and women who carry it forward, the men and women who pay for it, the men and women who direct it, are one and all tied by traditions, frightened by formulas, and crushed by competition.

It is impossible for any cabinet minister in this country to dissolve our teachers' associations because of any resolutions we may adopt. But we may not yet boast of our liberties.

**ETHICS** might be inculcated through answering questions on children's own daily problems. Each child is continually grappling and trying to solve the right and wrong of certain acts. Questions could be submitted by the pupils and the solution could be made a matter of discussion. No names or personalities need be introduced so that each question would be considered on its own merits.

### OUR GERMAN TEACHERS ON A VISIT

THE TEACHERS of German who recently returned to America from spending their vacations in traveling thru Germany, speak in terms of the highest appreciation of the courtesies of their official and professional hosts. The Emperor and the Empress and all the long line of officials and plain citizens thru the land joined in the cordial greeting to our compatriots.

Altho the mayors of cities welcomed the guests, the real hosts were the teachers of the Fatherland, a splendid body of respected and self-respecting men and women. Think of being entertained in a teachers' club house! And better still, think of simply having a club house, and using it as a source of inspiration for full social and civic existence!

Many of the larger cities of Germany

have teachers' club houses that are models of convenience and architectural beauty. Among those especially mentioned by the visitors are the club houses at Berlin, Hamburg, Düsseldorf and Frankfurt. The last is a club house for men and women.

### QUESTIONS ON QUESTIONING

DO I CALL on my pupils to recite in a fixed order, according to alphabet or seating, so that they are warned not to attend until their turn comes?

DO I name the pupil who is to answer before I place the question?

DO I ask direct questions, or

DO I ask alternative questions, which can be answered without knowledge or not?

DO I ask chiefly *fact* questions?

DO I ask leading or suggestive questions?

DO I repeat my questions, so that the dear children who are cloud-chasing may have a chance to know what it's all about?

DO I change my question after it is asked, so as to confuse the pupils, or to show that I am not quite sure what I do mean?

DO I answer my own questions?

DO I ask fool questions that no one can answer?

DO my questions make the children think?

DO I follow up an answer with suitable questions?

DO my questions lead to new organization of knowledge on the part of the pupils?

DO I repeat the pupil's answer?

DO my questions reach all the members of my class?

DO I pursue a slow pupil in lawyer-like cross-examination?

DO I make the recitation an inquisition, or am I content occasionally to listen while pupils express themselves freely and naturally?

## VITALIZING THE CLASS ROOM

ELIAS LIEBERMAN.

THE TRUE TEACHER is the engineer. From the point of vantage which his education and experience have given him, he studies the forces under his control and seeks to apply them. He turns his classroom into a community in which every citizen is pursuing the fascinating study of his surroundings in relation to himself. Each pupil learns the sources of his peculiar strength and the value of his individual contribution to the life of his exacting community.

All the colors of the spotlight of popularity play about the doer; the darkness of communal contempt settles about the sluggard, the shirker, the egotist, the parasite, until he mends his ways. All this when the teacher is the controlling power that he should be, when under his direction every human dynamo is throbbing away at the unique task to which it is best adapted.

But it is a far cry from the closet of the theorist in education to the workshop of the classroom. The vision is dulled by chalk dust, and the regenerator of humanity suffers from reports, examinations, marks and kindred visitations. How can the dream of the dynamic class be made an actuality to-day?

Let us assume for the sake of definiteness that we are dealing with boys whose ages range from twelve to fifteen. The live teacher will be able to see for himself how much of what follows is applicable to the conditions under which he works.

Immediately after the routine of preliminary organization has been attended to, an election for class president is held. The teacher explains what qualities of initiative, reliability and scholarship the boys should look for. He encourages discussion. This, if not done mechanically—for mere mechanism is death—develops community spirit and a feeling of responsibility among the pupils. Class colors and a class motto are then chosen. A vice-president, a secretary and an executive committee are elected. The duties of these officials are regulated by the teacher. A member who can print

(and what class has not at least one boy who enjoys such work) is requested to prepare motto cards and also a list of officers.

When all this has been done, the class is ready for its official organ, the *Class Journal*. A few weeks after the beginning of the term is the best time for the initiation of this important class activity. By that time the teacher should know his class. He can guide the selection of the editorial staff. The active fellow who has already begun asserting himself in the control of public opinion is elected editor-in-chief. The class is not likely to choose a weakling; but if it does, it is sure to profit by its error. Under the editor-in-chief works a staff of assistants. The following departments are assigned to various boys: Athletics; Class Notes and News; Editorials; Stories and Poems (original, if possible); Current Events; School News; Humor, and others that may suggest themselves to the individual teacher, for no two classes are ever exactly alike.

Not the least negligible factor in the array of talent which helps to produce the paper is the artist. He makes the cover and whatever inside decorations are required by the editor. The latter is made to feel that he has a difficult community to please and that upon him rests the burden of interesting, instructing and guiding the class. What a powerful force this *Journal* can be made on the side of order and progress!

Aside from the *Journal* every classroom may with profit have two bulletin boards in charge of their respective committees. One of these can be devoted to class news, announcements and current events; the other to artistic reproduction of master-pieces and interesting views grouped about a specific topic and changed frequently. A mere suggestion will stimulate a class into hunting for these clippings and pictures, especially if the feeling of unity for which the teacher has been striving is already making itself felt.

The cleanliness of the room is in charge of a committee responsible to the president. Other duties adapting themselves to a similar form of treatment are



ventilation, care of plants, care of the aquarium, the tutoring of weak pupils by the strong for the sake of class standing. The athletic manager is also a personage whose work, properly guided, may serve to build up a stronger physique in a puny, timid classmate.

Enough has been said to show that it is possible to organize a class into a community. Of course the teacher's personality is an indispensable aid to all this. Without him at his best nothing will work out properly. But there is no short cut known to man that will lead to results worth while without the expenditure of brains and effort. The reward is tremendous. If only one child has awakened to a sense of his own peculiar bent, what a success the teacher has been! Among the misfits of the world there is one less, one discord less to mar the music of the spheres.

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**IS IT FAIR** to confine "superior merit" to New York City High School teachers? Why not adopt a uniform "merit" scheme for all the teachers in the system?

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Does the study of the historic "humanities" as carried on in a modern atmosphere, produce the humane man—the man who, as in olden view, saw profoundly, thought deeply, sympathized widely, and became a blessed source of high ideals, correct thinking and benign sentiment? Are our high school graduates liberally educated to utilize and thereby to improve service in the making of books, the preaching of sermons, the nurture of children, the policing of cities, the administration of charity, and the presentation of plays? Is the organized training of the average college of liberal arts (not college life, since often by chance or design, this is unquestionably liberalizing) such as to produce high grade appreciation and effective powers of utilization in the fields of citizenship, art, social intercourse, religion?—David Snedden in "The Atlantic Monthly" for January.

## BOOK REVIEWS

**THE MONTESSORI METHOD.** By MARIA MONTESSORI; translated by ANNE E. GEORGE. 800 pp. xiii—377, illustrated. 1912. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company. \$1.75 net.

The Montessori Schools at Rome, or the *Casa dei Bambini* (Houses of Childhood), as they are called, have aroused a wide interest in educational circles. Not only has this interest been aroused on account of the remarkable progress of the little people who attend these schools but also on account of the fundamental principles underlying the work done there.

Madame Montessori, who is the creator of the *Casa dei Bambini*, believes that a scientific pedagogy should be established in order to insure educational progress, and that the schools themselves should offer the opportunity for educational research. A careful study of the child must be made before we attempt to educate him, and only in doing this shall we arrive at scientific pedagogy.

She would have the teacher a scientist, not only in the letter, but also in the spirit, and she would make ready the schools for his observations. In order to insure the teacher time for such observations and experimentation the spirit of the schools themselves must be changed, and the child must be allowed full freedom in order to create an atmosphere in which the child will truly reveal himself.

The formality of the ordinary school room vanishes; desks and stationary seats are abolished and easy chairs and sensible tables take their places. Madame Montessori herself designed the furniture, having it made scientifically, and light enough to be easily carried by the children when desired. Places are provided for wash basins with little pitchers and soap, so that the children may learn to care for their small persons. Low cupboards are made for the didactic material. Ample blackboard space is provided. Attractive pictures are hung on the walls. In this environment the children learn to conduct themselves with poise and sureness.

Madame Montessori has invented an anthropometer with which measurements of the children are taken at regular intervals and a record kept for each child. A physician is kept

in close touch with each child and when necessary with the home of the child.

It is clear that the discipline in these schools is far different from that demanded in our own class rooms. And yet visitors are struck with the order in the Casa dei Bambini. The children are all busy and happy, the teacher quiet and unobtrusive. Perfect liberty is allowed the child, within the limits of good breeding and with respect to the rights of others. A quiet orderly atmosphere is maintained, for each child is at work. This work is self-chosen. It is work that the child really wants to do, and wants to do at that particular time. He thus becomes absorbed in his task and discipline is nil. This order of things does away with class work, the lessons are individual by necessity. The teacher's task is passive rather than active. Her duty is to observe the child at work, note what interests him and how long, offer suggestions now and then, encourage what is worthy and discourage what is futile. Sometimes for hours not a word is spoken. The first idea that the child must acquire, in order to be actively disciplined, is that of the difference between good and evil. The task of the educator lies in seeing that the child does not confound good with immobility, and evil with activity, because our aim is to discipline for activity, for work, for good, not for immobility, not for passivity, not for obedience.

The Montessori schools are in session the greater part of the day, the time including luncheon and the nap hour.

The program for the day is as follows:

- 9-10—Entrance. Greeting. Inspection of personal cleanliness. Exercises of practical life; helping one another with aprons. Inspecting the cleanliness of the room. Language. Conversation period. Children give an account of the events of the day before. Religious exercises.
- 10-11—Intellectual exercises. Objective lessons interrupted by short rest periods. Names of things. Sense training.
- 10-11.30—Simple gymnastics.
- 11.30-12—Luncheon. Short prayer.
- 12-1—Free games.
- 1-2—Directed games, if possible in open air.

General inspection for cleanliness. Conversation.

2-3—Manual work. Clay modelling, design, etc.

3-4—Collective gymnastics and songs. Exercises to develop forethought. Visiting and caring for plants and animals.

The gymnastics follow the child's natural movements, walking, marching, salutations, movements for attention, placing objects gracefully, etc. The children exercise on swings, on the stairs, on rope ladders and do broad jumping. They learn to throw, to kneel, to rise, etc. They have the rhythms and many of the games of Froebel. They also play with numerous toys. Included under the head of gymnastics are the sense frames of the didactic material. There are respiratory gymnastics and drills in articulation as well. Gardening and caring for animals come under this head.

Vase making, house building and other plastic work are important features of manual training.

The educational feature that makes the Montessori method unique is the special emphasis placed on the training of the senses.

"Between the ages of 3 and 7 is the period for the formation of the sense activities as related to the intellect. This is the time when we should methodically direct the sense stimuli. The education of the senses makes men observers. Multiply the sensations and develop the capacity of appreciating fine differences in stimuli, and we refine the sensibilities and multiply man's pleasures."

Madame Montessori has designed and has had manufactured certain didactic material which is used in the education of the senses. This material has an added value in that it is so constructed as to make auto-correction and auto-education possible. "This material attracts the spontaneous attention of the child, and second, contains a rational gradation of stimuli."

The results obtained by the Montessori method of teaching reading and writing have astonished educators. Madame Montessori teaches her four year old children to write in a month or a month and a half. "They become experts after three months." She saw that "preparatory movements could be carried

on by means of repeated exercises not in the work itself but that which prepares for it."

The following are some of the steps leading up to reading:

1st, Tracing geometric inserts with the fingers.

2nd, Tracing sand paper letters with the fingers.

3rd, Placing wooden letters on corresponding letters printed on cards. The names of the letters are repeated while tracing. Consonants are in blue, the vowels in red.

4th, Learning different letter combinations from cards.

5th, Learning simple words from cards.

6th, Reading from the blackboard.

7th, Games played to test ability.

Madame Montessori saw that in writing

there were two things to master, the letters and the pencil. The letters were learned as they learned to read. Facility with the pencil was gained by drawing around geometric inserts and by filling in geometric figures with crayon. Later letters were traced. Then a movable alphabet was provided with which the children made words as the teacher articulated them.

Numeration is taught through the counting of money and with certain special didactic material. Trays are furnished divided into compartements, with numbers pasted to the bottom of each compartment. The children place the corresponding number of beans, peas, seeds, pegs, etc., in each division. Games are played impressing different number combinations.

ADELE MILN LINVILLE.

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